

31 JANUARY 1969

Allen Dulles Dead at Age 75

By Don Oberdorfer
Washington Post Staff Writer

Allen W. Dulles, the most creative, powerful and eminent American intelligence officer of modern times, died of complications of pneumonia late Wednesday night at Georgetown University Hospital. He was 75.

The grandson of one Secretary of State, the nephew of another and the brother of still another—the late John Foster Dulles—he was the Nation's foremost intelligence operative during World War II, working from Switzerland.

As director of the Central Intelligence Agency from 1953 to 1961, Mr. Dulles presided over some of the most brilliant successes and some of the worst embarrassments of American espionage.

Mr. Dulles did not establish the CIA, but he professionalized it and transformed it into one of the boldest and most important instruments of national power.

Under his direction, the CIA conceived, constructed and flew the U-2 spy plane and the spy-in-the-sky satellite, using them to photograph Russia's growing nuclear arsenal; tunneled under the Berlin Wall; toppled a Communist from power in Guatemala with guns for his enemies, and overthrew a leftist premier in Iran through a coup; began subsidies to American labor, education and cultural organizations operating overseas, and mounted the unsuccessful Bay of Pigs invasion in an attempt to topple Cuba's Fidel Castro.

A prominent plaque in the lobby of the CIA's vast concrete building at Langley, Va., bears a sculpted likeness of Mr. Dulles and the inscription: "His Monument Is Around Us."

A powerfully built, vigorous man with great energy and endurance, he had been in declining health since suffering a mild stroke more than a year ago. He entered Georgetown Hospital on Dec. 24, suffering from a bad case of flu which grew into pulmonary edema—water on the lungs. He died at 11:10 p.m. Wednesday from complications, according to a hospital spokesman.

In a statement issued at the White House yesterday, President Nixon praised Mr. Dulles as "a man who brought civility, intelligence and great dedication to everything he did." Mr. Nixon added that "in the nature of his task, his achievements were known to only a few. But—because of him—the world is a safer place today."

At Walter Reed Army Hospital, former President Eisenhower extolled Mr. Dulles as "a devoted public servant whose outstanding ability will be greatly missed by the Nation." Mr. Dulles headed the CIA during virtually the entire Eisenhower Administration and always maintained—without rebuttal from the White House—that CIA operations were carried out only after high-level approval.

Helms Tribute

Director Richard Helms of CIA, who worked for Mr. Dulles for many years, praised his "unique" contribution to the establishment of the modern American intelligence service. "He was inspired by what to him were the lasting American traditions of freedom, justice and tolerance," Helms said. "He clearly saw his career in intelligence as service to these principles. It was his deepest conviction that the American Government and people should know the truth, and that the truth should make and keep them free."

In the Soviet Union, where attacks were launched on Mr. Dulles beginning in February, 1948, and continuing with great intensity during his CIA years, the official news agency, Tass, declared yesterday that "he was not only spy number one, but he also fiercely hated the Soviet Union and was the advocate of unscrupulous ideological and propaganda activity by the United States Government."

Assailed in 1951

Strong as it was, the Tass statement did not reach the bombastic level set by in 1951 by Ilya Ehrenburg, a leading Soviet propagandist. "Even if the spy, Allen Dulles, should arrive in Heaven through somebody's absent-mindedness," Ehrenburg wrote in Pravda, "he would begin to blow up the clouds, mine the stars and slaughter the angels."

Though Allen Dulles of spoke and wrote of the dangers to the United States posed by Soviet ambition and aggressiveness, he was far less of an ideological anti-communist than his elder brother, John Foster Dulles. In the half-cloaked world of modern espionage, the younger Dulles worked against the Russians with great energy and enterprise, as he had against the Germans during World War II. Nevertheless, said one of his former close associates yesterday, "To Allen, Communism was a system to be dealt with. He never had his brother's moralistic loathing."

Clergyman's Son

With their three sisters, the Dulles brothers grew up in a series of Presbyterian parsonages occupied by their father the Rev. Allen M. Dulles. Often the brothers went sailing together. "Foster wants to reduce things to clear compass directions," said a sailing companion of the time. "Allen feels out the currents and moves on a more complicated course."

Young Allen was extremely precocious, writing a pamphlet at age 8 on the Boer War after hearing it discussed by his grandfather, John W. Foster, Secretary of State under President Benjamin Harrison, and his uncle, Robert Lansing, who was to be Secretary of State under President Woodrow Wilson.

After receiving B.A. and M.A. degrees from Princeton, Mr. Dulles served as a junior diplomat and intelligence officer in Europe. One of his favorite incidents of his early diplomatic service occurred in Bern, Switzerland, near the end of World War I when an "insignificant little man" called to see someone in authority in the U.S. Mission. "I was scheduled to play tennis so I had no time for him," Mr. Dulles recalled later. "Somewhat later I learned that the man was Lenin. If I had seen him, who knows what the results might have been."

He often cited the story later to CIA associates as an object lesson in his theory that no one is too insignificant for official attention.

Mr. Dulles resigned from the Foreign Service in 1928 to enter law practice in New

Cromwell, also his brother's firm. During World War II, Gen. William J. Donovan, the chief of the Office of Strategic Services, recruited Mr. Dulles as his intelligence chief in Switzerland.

Hundreds of Agents

According to the citation for his Medal for Merit, signed by President Truman in 1946, Mr. Dulles "within a year effectively built up an intelligence network employing hundreds of informants and operatives reaching into Germany, Yugoslavia, Hungary, Spain, Portugal and North Africa, and completely covering France, Italy and Austria." Mr. Dulles obtained and personally managed an agent within the German Foreign Office who had access to every document. Through him and other members of his extensive apparatus, Mr. Dulles obtained the first information on the German rocket program and many other secrets.

Directing clandestine negotiations with some of Hitler's generals, Mr. Dulles arranged the surrender of the German Army of Northern Italy nearly a week before V-E Day. This "secret surrender," later the subject of one of his several books, was one of his proudest achievements.

After he was recruited as Deputy Director of the CIA in 1950 by its director, Gen. Walter Bedell Smith, and in his eight years as CIA Director, Mr. Dulles constantly harked back to his wartime Swiss experience, which was probably the great adventure of his life. Because he had been an intelligence officer in the field, and a superbly successful one, he possessed a zest for the romance of cloak-and-dagger work which is rarely found at the top of intelligence bureaucracies.

Within the CIA, he was often referred to as "the Great White Case Officer" because he loved to dabble in the details of undercover work. In intelligence, a case officer is the man who manages the spies.

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A strong supporter and campaign aide of Gov. Thomas E. Dewey in 1948, Mr. Dulles would have been CIA Director in a Dewey Administration. When he was finally appointed to the job in February, 1953, by President Eisenhower, he brought a unique combination of assets.

The full impact of the Cold War had broken in Washington, with a massive increase in the official consciousness of Soviet military and political ambitions and operations. Mr. Dulles had been the most eminent and experienced intelligence field officer during the war, and now he became Director of CIA as the brother of the new Secretary of State.

Perhaps as important, his love of "the craft of intelligence" (the title of another of his books), his uncommon boldness and his magnetic ability to attract bold and able men all contributed to a surge of power and importance at CIA.

When Mr. Dulles learned in 1954 that German scientists were working on highly secret strategic missiles under Soviet direction deep inside Russia, he insisted that the United States had to learn the details whatever the cost or risk.

His staff came up with idea of a high-flying spy plane. Mr. Dulles convinced the Eisenhower Administration and Congress that the CIA should build and fly it, on grounds that the Defense Department was much too slow.

From the go-ahead to build a prototype U-2 in December, 1954, it was only nine months to the first test flight and about a year after that to the first flights over Russia.

Despite the uproar following the crash of Francis Gary Powers in a U-2 in May, 1960, many authorities consider the overflights as the most important American intelligence triumph of the postwar era.

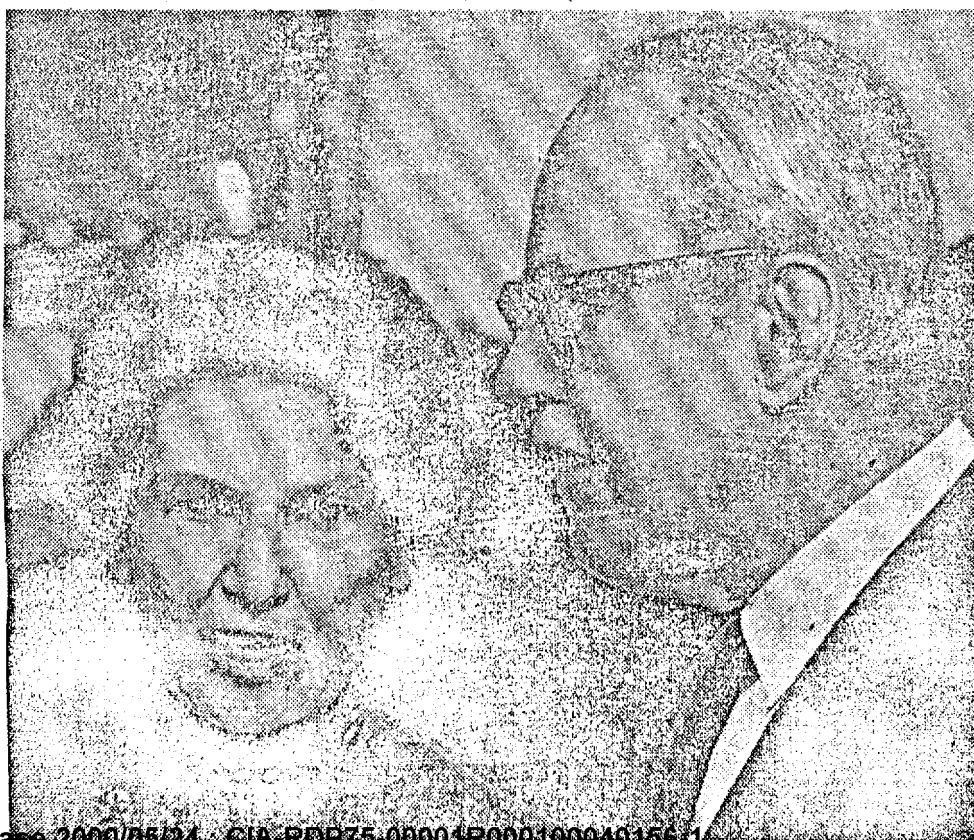
On the other hand, the Bay of Pigs invasion of April, 1961—another product of the Dulles CIA—is generally considered the greatest U.S. intelligence blunder. Mr. Dulles convinced the newly inaugurated President, John F. Kennedy, that if an invasion was to be successful, it was impossible to wait. The disastrous result shattered Kennedy's confidence in Mr. Dulles and, for a time, in the CIA. Mr. Dulles retired as CIA Director in November, 1961, with public praise from Kennedy and the presidential observation to CIA employees that "your successes are unparalleled, your failures trumpeted."

Mrs. Clover Todd Dulles, the former CIA Director's wife, survives him, as do two daughters, Mrs. Joan Buresch of Zurich and Mrs. Clover Dulles Jebson of New York City, and a son, Allen M. Dulles, who was severely wounded in the Korean war.

Also surviving are three sisters, including Eleanor Lansing Dulles of Washington. Funeral services will be held at 11 a.m. Saturday at Georgetown Presbyterian Church, 3115 P. st. nw.

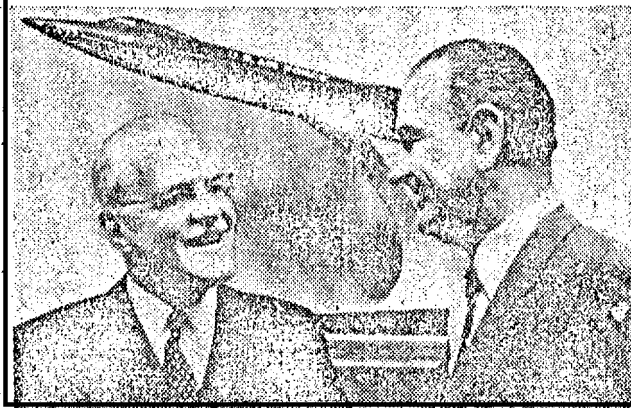
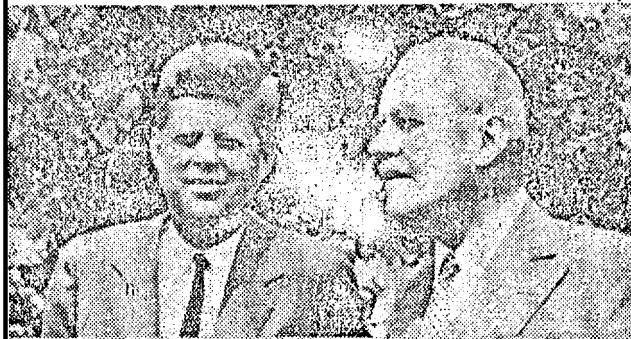
March 22, 1902
FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH,
WATERTOWN, N. Y.
Dear Allie:
I have just finished reading
your book and I want to congratulate
you. It is fine, and you must have worked
very hard on it. Mother has sold five
copies already.
with love from John Foster Dulles

A 1902 note from John Foster Dulles congratulated his precocious, 8-year-old brother on a "book"—actually a pamphlet —Allen Dulles wrote on the Boer War.



Allen Dulles and his wife, Clover, at Swedish Embassy party in December, 1967.

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United Press International

Allen Dulles, the Nation's foremost spymaster, is shown with his brother, John Foster Dulles, and with Presidents John F. Kennedy and Lyndon B. Johnson.